

## *Hillary Rodham Clinton*

*1947–*

UNITED STATES SENATOR  
DEMOCRAT FROM NEW YORK

2001–



Image courtesy of the Member

**HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON WAS ELECTED** to the United States Senate by the people of New York on November 7, 2000, after years of public service on behalf of children and families. She is the first First Lady of the United States to hold elective office.

Hillary Diane Rodham was born on October 26, 1947, in Chicago, Illinois, the oldest of three children of Hugh Ellsworth Rodham and Dorothy Howell Rodham. She attended Wellesley College, where she became a campus leader and was chosen by her classmates as the first student commencement speaker.<sup>1</sup> After earning a B.A. in political science in 1969, Hillary entered Yale Law School and finished her J.D. in 1973. Inspired by the work of Marian Wright Edelman, a Yale alumna and children's rights activist who later founded the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), Hillary worked for the CDF after graduation. In 1974, during the Watergate impeachment inquiry, she joined the staff of the House Judiciary Committee special counsel. Following her work with the committee, she accepted a teaching position at the University of Arkansas School of Law and, in 1975, married William J. "Bill" Clinton, whom she had met at Yale. They have a daughter, Chelsea.<sup>2</sup>

In 1977, President James Earl "Jimmy" Carter appointed Hillary to the board of Legal Services Corporation, an organization that disbursed federal money to legal aid bureaus nationally. She founded the Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families and, in 1978, was named to the CDF board (chairing it from 1986 to 1989). In 1992, she campaigned widely for her husband, who was elected U.S. President that November. For eight years, Hillary served as an active First Lady, working on health care reform, children's issues, and women's rights.

In 1999, when senior New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan announced his retirement, Hillary joined the race to succeed him.<sup>3</sup> On November 7, 2000, she prevailed with 56 percent of the vote over New York Republican Representative Rick Lazio.<sup>4</sup>

Senator Clinton serves on three committees: Environment and Public Works; Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; and the Senate Special Committee on Aging. She is the first New Yorker ever appointed to serve on the Senate Armed Services Committee. As the first woman to represent New York in the Senate, Hillary's efforts to master the chamber's legislative processes and her ability to work across the aisle have made her an effective and respected Member of the Senate.<sup>5</sup>

Senator Clinton's work has focused on building a better future for New York families, including greater opportunity through economic development; increased access to health care and education; energy independence through development of alternative fuel and energy resources; and security at home and abroad. She won support for legislation to clean up industrial pollution for economic development, to ensure the safety of children's medicine, and to repair and modernize schools. After the September 11, 2001, attacks, Senator Clinton worked tirelessly to enable New York to recover, including ensuring adequate federal funds for rebuilding. She also won passage of legislation improving communication for federal and local emergency first responders.<sup>6</sup> As a member of the Armed Services Committee, Senator Clinton led the bipartisan effort to extend health care benefits to members of the National Guard and Reserve.

## FOR FURTHER READING

*Biographical Directory of the U.S. Congress*, "Hillary Rodham Clinton," <http://bioguide.congress.gov>

Clinton, Hillary Rodham. *It Takes a Village: And Other Lessons Children Teach Us* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

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## NOTES

- 1 "Hillary Rodham Clinton" *Current Biography*, 2002 (New York: H. W. Wilson and Company, 2002): 93–94.
- 2 *Current Biography*, 2002: 94–95; *Politics in America*, 2002 (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 2001): 671.
- 3 Adam Nagourney, "The Senate Campaign—the First Lady," 18 September 2000, *New York Times*: A1.
- 4 "Election Statistics, 1920 to Present," <http://clerk.house.gov/members/electionInfo/elections.html>; *Politics in America*, 2002: 671.
- 5 *Politics in America*, 2002: 671; *Almanac of American Politics*, 2002 (Washington, D.C.: National Journal Inc.): 1047.
- 6 *Congressional Record*, Senate, 107th Cong., 1st sess. (3 December 2001): 12298; Frank Bruni, "Show Us the Money," 16 December 2001, *New York Times Magazine*: 60. See also John F. Harris, "Hillary's Big Adventure," 27 January 2002, *Washington Post Magazine*: W8; "Official Biography of Hillary Rodham Clinton," [http://Clinton.senate.gov/about\\_hrc.html](http://Clinton.senate.gov/about_hrc.html) (accessed 14 December 2004).